

**Title/Subject:** College of medicine Credit Hour Policy/Process

**Applies to:** ☒ faculty ☐ students ☐ staff ☒ Curriculum Committee & Course Leadership

☒ Policy ☐ System ☒ Process/Procedure ☐ Guideline/Standard ☐ Position Description

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- **Introduction**

- **Historical/Contextual Overview:** The LCME requirements for duration of an MD program are \* measured in weeks. Federal agencies (federal financial aid), regional accrediting agencies (SACS), and state oversight (THECB) utilize credit hours as an approximate measure of student learning. See TAMU rule 11.03.99.M1 Definition of a Credit Hour.
- **Reason for the Policy/Process:** In order to comply with TAMU and THECB guidelines and policies, the COM must have policies and procedures for determining the credit hours awarded for courses and programs that conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education.
- **Scope:** This policy applies to the MD program only, including all tracks within the MD program.

**Policy/Process Statement:** The COM will indirectly employ the credit hour as the measure of educational credit a student may receive for reporting or other purposes when necessary. Distance education and hybrid courses will use the same credit hour requirements as face-to-face courses. The use of the credit hour will follow the rules, regulations, and guidelines as specified by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, the federal government, the Texas Administrative Code, and the Liaison Committee on Medical Education.

The Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree offered by the COM does not use the credit hour as a measure for which students receive credit or progress. Instead, the MD degree requires at 164 full-time weeks of credit over approximately 4 years. The 164 full-time weeks of credit are equivalent to 194 credit hours using the following conversion methodology:

- The CC will determine credit hours for each course each year. If content is moved, removed, or added to a course, the CC should review the course contact hours and credit hours and therefore the course length in weeks/days. Credit hours are determined based on the number of contact hours (both regular and lab). See COM Credit Hour Policy and Preclerkship and Clerkship Work Hours Policy for more details on counting contact hours.
- Preclerkship or Semesters 1-3 courses contact hours include but are not limited to lectures, laboratory, small group discussions, case-based learning activities and problem solving. Average contact time per week is approximately 28 hours. Additionally students complete 2 to 3 hours out-of-class time per hour of contact instruction.  $\text{Credit Hours} = (\text{contact hours}/16) + (\text{lab hours}/48)$
- In the Clerkship and Clinical experiences of MS2 (Semester 4), MS3 (Semesters 4-6), and MS 4 (Year 4), actual contact time is greater. Because the educational approach is fundamentally different, with less emphasis on formal didactic instruction and study and greater emphasis on experiential learning, the

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Authority: Curriculum Committee

Responsible University Office: Office of Academic Affairs

Responsible University Administrator: Director of AA and Assistant Deans of AA

Review/Revision Schedule: Annually July/August, approved 09/2020

Indexed as: credit hours, degree plan, schedules, calendars, course length, calendars

number of contact hours needed to meet the equation that one full-time week equals one (1) credit hour is increased to between 40-70 contact hours per week.

- The credit hour equivalents of clinical rotations and electives is 1 hour per week.
- Students will also complete longitudinal components of the curriculum, which run in tandem with the MS1 – MS4 courses and clerkships. Credit hours are assigned to these courses based on contact hours and are comparable to other courses where the average contact time per week is approximately 16 hours for one (1) credit hour in non-clinical courses and 40-70 contact hours for one (1) credit hour for clinical courses.

In sum, the credit-hour equivalency for the MD degree program is as follows:

See Degree Plan in Compass for details.

Preclerkship: 66 weeks (equivalent to 78 credit hours)

Clerkship: 54 weeks (equivalent to 57 credit hours; include EM, RAD, and 8 CH Step 1 Study)

Clerkship Elective: 19 weeks (equivalent to 19 credit hours)

4<sup>th</sup> year Required: ~10-14 weeks (equivalent to 18 credit hours, include 10 required, 8 CH Step 2 Study)

4<sup>th</sup> year Elective: 22 weeks (22 credit hours + 22 elective)

- **Procedure:**

1. This policy must be used along with the Calendar Scheduling Policy and Preclerkship and Clerkship Work Hour Policies.
2. Each year as the CC audits credit hours during calendar review, the CC should audit content and ensure any content changes are reflected within the credit hours and degree plan.
3. Degree plan and credit hour changes MUST be made 9 month-1 year in advance and must be approved by CC no later than October 1 prior to the affected AY.
4. Degree plan and credit hour changes must be submitted to TAMU through the CARS system by November 1 prior to the AY.

- **Resources and Tools:** *(List any applications, tools, or forms required and where they can be located.)*

Name	Purpose	Location	Distribution
COM Degree Plan	To ensure credit hours are correct within the COMPASS system at TAMU	Howdy Portal	OAA has access
Syllabus Face Sheets	Both clerkship and PC face sheets have questions related to duty hours or work hours for students	OAA	Distributed annually with updated syllabus template
Calendar Scheduling Policy	Ensure calendar and courses align with this policy	COM Policy Website	Website
Previous COM Calendars & COM Curriculum Models	Ensure number of weeks/days are adequate each AY and for each class as they progress between phases.	OAA Shared Drive	OAA admin access
Syllabus Face Sheets	Both clerkship and PC face sheets have questions related to duty hours or work hours for students	OAA	Distributed annually with updated

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			syllabus template
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- **Revision History:**

Date of Change	Authority	Summary of Changes	Document Location
08.24.20	OAA/CC	Created Credit Hour Policy	OAA files
09.11.20	OAA/CC	Revised/updated for CC approval	OAA files

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